

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4442

To establish a commission to promote awareness of the National Wildlife Refuge System among the American public as the System celebrates its centennial anniversary in 2003, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 11, 2000

Mr. SAXTON (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. DINGELL, and Mr. CUNNINGHAM) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

A BILL

To establish a commission to promote awareness of the National Wildlife Refuge System among the American public as the System celebrates its centennial anniversary in 2003, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Wildlife Ref-
5 uge System Centennial Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) President Theodore Roosevelt began the
2 National Wildlife Refuge System by establishing the
3 first refuge at Pelican Island, Florida, on March 14,
4 1903.

5 (2) The National Wildlife Refuge System is
6 comprised of more than 93,000,000 acres of Federal
7 lands managed by the United States Fish and Wild-
8 life Service in more than 520 individual refuges and
9 thousands of waterfowl production areas located in
10 all 50 States and the territories of the United
11 States.

12 (3) The System is the only network of Federal
13 lands dedicated singularly to wildlife conservation
14 and where wildlife dependent recreation and environ-
15 mental education are priority public uses.

16 (4) The System serves a vital role in the con-
17 servation of millions of migratory birds, endangered
18 species and threatened species, fish, marine mam-
19 mals, and the habitats on which these species de-
20 pend.

21 (5) Each year the System provides millions of
22 Americans with opportunities to participate in wild-
23 life-dependent recreation, including hunting, fishing,
24 and wildlife observation.

1 (6) Public visitation to National Wildlife Ref-
2 uges is growing, with more than 35,000,000 visitors
3 annually. It is essential that visitor centers and pub-
4 lic use facilities be properly constructed, operated,
5 and maintained.

6 (7) The National Wildlife Refuge System Vol-
7 unteer and Community Partnership Enhancement
8 Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–242) significantly en-
9 hances the ability to incorporate volunteers and
10 partnerships in refuge management.

11 (8) The System currently has an unacceptable
12 backlog in critical operations and maintenance
13 needs.

14 (9) The centennial anniversary of the System in
15 2003 offers an historic opportunity to appreciate
16 these natural resources and expand public enjoyment
17 of these lands.

18 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are the fol-
19 lowing:

20 (1) To establish a commission to promote
21 awareness of the National Wildlife Refuge System
22 among the American public as the System celebrates
23 its centennial anniversary in 2003.

1 (2) To develop a long-term plan to meet the
2 priority operations, maintenance, and construction
3 needs of the System.

4 (3) To improve public use programs and facili-
5 ties of the System to meet the increasing needs of
6 the public for wildlife-dependent recreation in the
7 21st century.

8 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM CENTENNIAL**
9 **COMMISSION.**

10 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is hereby established
11 the National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Commis-
12 sion (in this Act referred to as the “Commission”).

13 (b) **MEMBERS.**—

14 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commission shall be
15 composed of the following members:

16 (A) The Director of the United States Fish
17 and Wildlife Service.

18 (B) Up to 10 persons recommended by the
19 Secretary of the Interior and appointed by the
20 President.

21 (C) The chairman and ranking minority
22 member of the Committee on Resources of the
23 House of Representatives and of the Committee
24 on Environment and Public Works of the Sen-
25 ate, the congressional representatives of the Mi-

1 gratory Bird Conservation Commission, and the
2 Secretary of the Interior, who shall be ex-officio
3 members.

4 (2) APPOINTMENTS.—Persons appointed by the
5 President as members of the Commission may not
6 otherwise be officers or employees of the Federal
7 Government and shall, in the judgment of the Presi-
8 dent, represent the diverse beneficiaries of the Sys-
9 tem and have outstanding knowledge or appreciation
10 of wildlife, natural resource management, or wildlife-
11 dependent recreation. In making such appointments,
12 the President shall make every effort to ensure that
13 the views of the hunting, fishing, and wildlife obser-
14 vation communities are represented on the Commis-
15 sion.

16 (3) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the
17 Commission—

18 (A) shall not affect its power or functions;

19 and

20 (B) shall be expeditiously filled in the same
21 manner as the original appointment.

22 (c) CHAIRPERSON.—The President shall appoint one
23 of the members as the Chairperson of the Commission.

1 (d) BASIC PAY.—The members of the Commission
2 shall receive no compensation for their service on the Com-
3 mission.

4 (e) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—

5 (1) LEGISLATIVE BRANCH MEMBERS.—Mem-
6 bers of the Commission from the legislative branch
7 of the Government shall be allowed necessary travel
8 expenses otherwise authorized by law for official
9 travel.

10 (2) EXECUTIVE BRANCH MEMBERS.—Members
11 of the Commission from the executive branch of the
12 Government shall be allowed necessary travel ex-
13 penses in accordance with section 5702 of title 5,
14 United States Code.

15 (3) OTHER MEMBERS AND STAFF.—Members of
16 the Commission appointed by the President and
17 staff of the Commission may be allowed necessary
18 travel or transportation expenses as authorized by
19 section 5702 of title 5, United States Code.

20 (f) FUNCTIONS.—The Commission shall—

21 (1) prepare, in cooperation with Federal, State,
22 local, and nongovernmental partners, a plan to com-
23 memorate the 100th anniversary of the beginning of
24 the National Wildlife Refuge System on March 14,
25 2003;

1 (2) coordinate the activities of such partners
2 undertaken pursuant to such plan; and

3 (3) plan and host, in cooperation with such
4 partners, a conference on the National Wildlife Ref-
5 uge System, and assist in the activities of such a
6 conference.

7 (g) STAFF.—Subject to the availability of appropria-
8 tions, the Commission may employ staff as necessary to
9 carry out its functions.

10 (h) DONATIONS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may, in ac-
12 cordance with criteria established under paragraph
13 (2), accept and use donations of money, personal
14 property, or personal services.

15 (2) CRITERIA.—The Commission shall establish
16 written criteria to be used in determining whether
17 the acceptance of gifts or donations under paragraph
18 (1) would—

19 (A) reflect unfavorably upon the ability of
20 the Commission or any employee of the Com-
21 mission to carry out its responsibilities or offi-
22 cial duties in a fair and objective manner; or

23 (B) compromise the integrity or the ap-
24 pearance of the integrity of any person involved
25 in those programs.

1 (i) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—Upon the request of
2 the Commission—

3 (1) the Secretary of the Interior, acting through
4 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, may
5 provide to the Commission the administrative sup-
6 port services necessary for the Commission to carry
7 out its responsibilities under this Act, including serv-
8 ices related to budgeting, accounting, financial re-
9 porting, personnel, and procurement; and

10 (2) the head of any other appropriate Federal
11 department or agency may furnish to the Commis-
12 sion such advice and assistance, with or without re-
13 imbursement, to assist the Commission in carrying
14 out its functions.

15 (j) REPORTS.—

16 (1) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year
17 after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually
18 thereafter, the Commission shall submit to the Con-
19 gress an annual report of its activities and plans to
20 Congress.

21 (2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than September
22 30, 2004, the Commission shall submit to the Con-
23 gress a final report of its activities, including an ac-
24 counting of all funds received and expended by the
25 Commission.

1 (k) TERMINATION.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall termi-
3 nate upon the submission of its final report under
4 subsection (j).

5 (2) DISPOSITION OF MATERIALS.—Upon termi-
6 nation of the Commission and after consultation
7 with the Archivist of the United States and the Sec-
8 retary of the Smithsonian Institution, the Secretary
9 of the Interior—

10 (A) may deposit all books, manuscripts,
11 miscellaneous printed matter, memorabilia, rel-
12 ics, and other similar materials of the Commis-
13 sion relating to the 100th anniversary of the
14 National Wildlife Refuge System in Federal,
15 State, or local libraries or museums or other-
16 wise dispose of such materials; and

17 (B) may use other property acquired by
18 the Commission for the purposes of the Na-
19 tional Wildlife Refuge System, or treat such
20 property as excess property.

1 **SEC. 4. FULFILLING THE PROMISE OF AMERICA'S NA-**
2 **TIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM—MEET-**
3 **ING OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE AND CON-**
4 **STRUCTION NEEDS.**

5 The Secretary of the Interior shall prepare and sub-
6 mit to the Congress a long-term plan to address priority
7 operations, maintenance and construction needs of the
8 National Wildlife Refuge System to address—

9 (1) the priority staffing and operation needs of
10 the System, as determined through the Refuge Oper-
11 ating Needs system and individual refuge Com-
12 prehensive Conservation Plans;

13 (2) the maintenance and construction needs as
14 identified in the Maintenance Management System,
15 the 5-year deferred maintenance list, and the 5-year
16 construction list; and

17 (3) transition costs as identified in the Depart-
18 ment of the Interior analysis of newly acquired ref-
19 uge lands.

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